

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2049
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EGEN, IN
SUBJECT: DESAI VISIT: ECONOMIC ISSUES AT
BRUSSELS STOPOVER

1. PRIME MINISTER DESAI ARRIVED IN BRUSSELS JUNE 5 FOR AN OFFICIAL VISIT OF LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS ENROUTE TO THE UNITED STATES. DESAI USED THE STOP TO MEET BOTH WITH THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT AND WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION. ACCORDING TO INDIAN PRESS ACCOUNTS, DISCUSSIONS WITH BELGIAN OFFICIALS CONCERNED ECONOMIC ISSUES TO A GREAT EXTENT (SEE SEPTTEL FOR DESAI'S COMMENTS ON AFRICA), AND HIS HALF DAY OF MEETINGS WITH THE EC NATURALLY HAD AN EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC FOCUS.

2. THE CENTERPOINT OF DESAI'S MEETING WITH COMMUNITY OFFICIALS, AS REPORTED IN THE INDIAN PRESS, WAS AN INNOCUOUS EXCHANGE OF APPEALS FOR STRENGTHENED ECONOMIC TIES. DESAI REFERRED TO HIS GOVERNMENT'S RECENT MOVES TO LIBERALIZE IMPORT POLICY, IMPLYING THAT IT WAS UP TO THE EC TO RESPOND. TWO PRESS SOURCES REPORT THAT DESAI PRIVATELY EXPRESSED CON-

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CERN OVER "THE GROWING TENDENCY TOWARDS PROTECTIONISM." ONE JOURNALIST QUOTED EEC SOURCES TO THE EFFECT THAT DESAI HAD FAILED TO "GET HIS VIEWS ACROSS ON TEXTILES." IN CALLING ON THE COMMUNITY TO "DO ITS PART IN SPEEDING UP THE PROCESS OF NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE." DESAI REPORTEDLY REFERRED ESPECIALLY TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNCTAD COMMON FUND.

3. IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS DESAI ACKNOWLEDGED "THE DIFFICULTIES THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WERE PASSING THROUGH AT PRESENT." HE CALLED FOR "GENUINE INTERDEPENDENCE" WHICH WOULD ENSURE "FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, FULL RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE AND PROSPECTS FOR USING THEIR RESOURCES FULLY, AND FOR DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANSION OF THEIR OWN ECONOMY." HE ANNOUNCED TO THE PRESS THAT THE COMMUNITY HAD AGREED TO THE INDIAN PROPOSAL FOR A TRADE PROMOTION PROGRAM WHICH INCLUDED THE OPENING OF A TRADE PROMOTION OFFICE IN BRUSSELS.

4. COMMENT: THE PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS AS CARRIED HERE ACCURATELY REFLECT, WE BELIEVE, THE ISSUES AND THEMES THAT WILL BE ON HIS MIND IF ECONOMIC ISSUES ARE RAISED DURING HIS MEETINGS WITH THE PRESIDENT OR OTHER US OFFICIALS.
BLOOD

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